7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21701
4/13/90

Mr. Stephen S. Rosenfeld
The Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20071

Dear Mr. Rosenfeld,

In your today's "The Zionist Card" column you say, "... the PLO itself has already formally accepted the idea of a two-state solution." I fear this is wishful thinking. If you can cite a formal and official act by the PLO, rather than an evasive and deceptive statement by Arafat, I'll appreciate it very much.

I believe that what you have in mind is a statement Arafat finally evolved under pressure that the administration and the press interpreted as you do and in which he said no such thing. He did pretend to be recognizing the right of the State of Israel to live in peace within secure boundaries. But he was careful not to refer to the State of Israel. If you can refer to his actual words you'll find that he referred only to the "people" of Israel. I do not recall whether the Post carried his exact words but I do recall quite clearly that I saw and heard him on TV and was shocked that the administration and the press grabbed for the meaning that was not there.

Do you know of a single Arab leader who has survived acknowledging the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and within secure borders? I don't.

No long before this Arafat statement the PLO did hold a meeting in North Africa and it refused to change the charter or to make any formal statement having any resemblance to what the administration says Arafat said.

I do not have your sources but I've followed this situation as closely as is possible for me and with the single exception of the reluctant Mubarek I do not know of a single Arab leader or government that has recognized the right of the State of Israel to exist as a state. Except for Egypt all remain in a state of war with Israel, hardly an indication of peaceful intent. You know what happened to Abdullah, Sadat and many Arabs who favored peace with Israel or just talked to Israelis about peace and recognition.

But even if the PLO did "formally" accept the existence of the State of Israel and even if this led to some kind of a formal agreement between the PLO and the State of Israel, how can that assure peace for the State of Israel with the entire Muslim world except Egypt perpetuating ths state of war? Can you see Iraq or Syria giving formal recognition to the existence of the State of Israel? Or Iran? Saudi Arabia? I cannot.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

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